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Introduction: War and the Body

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1. War and the Body

Kevin McSorley

Introduction

'I don't know if anyone really knows war until it lives inside of them .. This is my country, the country of my parents, my family, my friends, my future. And the war has gotten into all of these. I know everyone has suffered a loss in this war: a family member killed, a loved one captured and never heard of again. But it goes much deeper than this, to the very heart of the country, to my very heart. When I walk on the road, I carry nervousness with me as a habit, as a way of being. When I hear a sharp noise, I do not stop and ask "what is that?" like a normal person .. This lives in me – it's a part of my being, a constant companion'

(young Mozambican woman, cited in Nordstrom 1998: 104)

This book places the body at the centre of critical thinking about war, giving embodiment and bodily issues an analytic recognition they have often been denied in the annals and ontology of conventional war scholarship. The reality of war is not just politics by any other means but politics incarnate, politics written on and experienced through the thinking, feeling bodies of men and women. From steeled combatants to abject victims, from the grieving relative to the exhausted aid worker, war occupies innumerable bodies in a multitude of ways, profoundly shaping lives and ways of being human. The opening description of war provides one vivid illustration of how war 'makes sense' at a fundamentally embodied and affective level. For the young Mozambican narrator, war is an anticipatory nervousness that constantly 'lives inside' her, a somatic knowing that underpins her every thought and move. As Nordstrom (1998: 108) argues, something 'far more complex, multifaceted and enduring than the formal boundaries of war demarcated in military cultures takes root in the quotidian life of a country at war'. It is this ontology of war that the

scholarship in this book seeks to elucidate and explore – the countless affective, sensory and embodied ways through which war lives and breeds.¹

Shaw (2005: 40-1) argues that ‘the defect of most social theory of war and militarism is .. that it has not considered war as practice, i.e. what people actually *do* in war’. This book aims to address that omission via an explicit focus upon the *embodied* practices, structures of feeling and lived experiences through which war and militarism take place. While this will include the examination of specific modes of embodying force and practices of ‘warfighting’, the analysis extends both temporally and spatially to consider the bodily preparations for, and the corporeal aftermaths of, war – both within militaries and beyond. Indeed, an analytic focus upon the body tends to render any clear demarcation of discrete warzones and times problematic², emphasizing instead the enactment and reproduction of war through affective dispositions, corporeal careers, embodied suffering and somatic memories that endure across time and space.³

Furthermore, it is not just the bodies of combatants and victims that are produced by and central to war, but the bodies of veterans, witnesses, pacifists, patriots and many others. Given the global nature of contemporary economic, migratory and media flows, few in today’s interconnected world remain completely isolated from war’s touch (Sylvester 2011). While in post-conscription Western states with increasingly professionalized and privatised militaries, there may be less direct disciplinary engagement with civilian bodies - leading some commentators to have proposed the existence of ‘post-military society’ (Shaw 1991) and ‘post-heroic warfare’ (Luttwak 1995) – many such states have been marked by a profound re-militarization at a wider political and cultural level in recent decades, a mobilisation that has often been intensely embodied and emotional. O Tuathail (2003: 859), for example, describes the political channelling of ‘the affective tsunami unleashed by the terrorist attacks of 2001’. He argues that 9/11 was processed by many Americans in a fundamentally visceral manner, becoming a ‘somatic marker’ – effectively a ‘gut instinct’ shaping perception and judgement below the threshold of rational, deliberative discussion - that would subsequently be appropriated to legitimate the military invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Stahl (2010) relatedly understands the inculcation of contemporary consumers into the burgeoning interactive culture of ‘militainment’ in terms of affective and kinaesthetic entrainment, a seduction whose pleasures are ultimately felt at the expense of developing any other critical capacities to engage with matters of military might. It is through such mundane cultural practices that the legitimacy of having vast military force – what the anthropologist Catherine Lutz (2009) refers to as the ‘military normal’ - assumes an implicitness, becomes something not thought but routinely felt in everyday life. Such examples point to the need to think about the reproduction of war, and war readiness, in terms of a militarization of sensation, affect and the body that operates over time and across multiple and broad constituencies⁴.

The remainder of this chapter will concentrate on exploring the relative neglect of embodiment in many conventional discussions of war and the increasingly problematic and paradoxical status of the body in recent Western wars.

The Paradox of War and the Body

For Elaine Scarry, the key paradox that constitutes the structure of war is that “while the central fact of war is injuring and the central goal of war is to out-injure the opponent, the fact of injuring tends to be absent from strategic and political descriptions of war” (1985: 12). Although war is “the most radically embodying event in which human beings ever collectively participate” (p.71), the conventions of strategic, military and political discussions of war are nonetheless often marked by a profound disavowal and transference of this embodied nature and the bodily mutilation at its heart. For Scarry then, the continuing domination of warfare “requires both the reciprocal infliction of massive injury and the eventual disowning of the injury so that its attributes can be transferred elsewhere, as they cannot be permitted to cling to the original site of the wound, the human body” (p.64). The idioms and metaphors of strategic thought, such as describing armies as a single combatant or machine, mean that real human injury becomes no longer recognizable or interpretable in such discussions.

As Scarry recognizes, such abstraction may seem appropriate for a mode of strategic thinking whose key didactic goal is to propose universal, scientific laws of warfare which will inform how future wars can be waged to secure political advantage most effectively, a position traditionally associated with the founding figure of strategic thought, Carl von Clausewitz.⁵ Nonetheless, this instrumental common sense of strategic discourse – war as a form of policy-making - rules other concerns and ways of knowing out of court. Carol Cohn's (1987) ethnographic study of nuclear defence strategists vividly illustrates the ways in which one such hermetically sealed, techno-strategic discourse - of 'limited nuclear war' - radically excludes the asking of certain questions and the expression of certain values. Claims to legitimacy within this rational world came from technical expertise and 'the disciplined purging of emotional valences that might threaten objectivity' (p.717). For Cohn, it was 'not only impossible to talk about humans in this language, it also becomes in some sense illegitimate to ask the paradigm to reflect human concerns .. no one will claim that the questions are unimportant, but they are inexpert, unprofessional, irrelevant to the business at hand' (p.711-2).⁶

For Martin Shaw (2003), although war may be conceived as strategy it is always experienced as slaughter: 'War is both the rational, purposive activity that strategic thought guides *and* the necessarily unpredictable, uncontrollable, irrationally destructive clash of opposing wills that combatants and victims experience – and humanist critics emphasize' (p.271). However, it is not just that abstract strategic thinking does not tell us much about this embodied experience of slaughter that is central to war, but Shaw argues that it is also complicit, that in the twentieth century 'strategy has come to contribute to slaughter on a scale unimaginable even in the bloody era on which Carl von Clausewitz reflected' (p.269). Following Bauman's (1990) analysis of the dehumanising tendencies of modern thought and state power - particularly the atrophy of the moral imagination in bureaucratic systems - Shaw argues that modernity deeply reinforced the tendencies of 'rational' strategy to produce 'irrational' outcomes. Barbarity has been the outcome, rather than the antithesis of, strategic thinking and planning in modern war.

The fundamentally dual character of war was most salient in the tendency of the industrialised total wars of the twentieth century to become *degenerate* not only in

their treatment of soldiers' bodies as 'cannon fodder', as human materiel for the industrial war machine, but also in their increasing targeting and killing of civilians as well as enemy combatants (Shaw 2005). Total social mobilisation and total destruction were crucially linked in the industrialised mode of warfare, as the supply side and civilian morale became seen as legitimate targets, particularly for the strategic yet indiscriminate area bombing of airpower. Given the enormity of the death tolls even winning seemed scant redemption at times, the mechanised slaughter so barbarous as to challenge the very belief in the utility of war itself (Coker 2001, Kassimeris 2006). Such degeneracy continued in many of the wars of decolonisation during the post-WWII decades. However, as these wars began to fail, and particularly when Western casualties began to seem disproportionate to their outcomes, public opinion in the West increasingly turned against them. Vietnam in particular marked a watershed in post-WWII warfighting, the images of U.S. soldiers in body bags and the burned, naked body of the young Vietnamese girl Pan Thj Kim Phuc fleeing a napalm bombing cementing a verdict of the war as illegitimate and inhumane. For Shaw (2005: 6), 'the use of napalm .. came to represent the inhumanity of airpower'. Napalm clung to the original site of the wound, the human body, burning beneath the skin, fatally undermining the war's sense of morality and purpose.

The Revolution in Military Affairs

The eventual response to the 'Vietnam syndrome' was the emergence of a new way of warfighting in the 1990s (Shaw 2005). At this time, analysis among the strategic community focussed on what became known as the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) - 'the application of new technologies into a significant number of military systems [that] combines with innovative operational concepts and organizational adaptation in a way that fundamentally alters the character and conduct of conflict' (Krepenovich 1994: 30). The RMA was to be a technologically determined revolution where the power of sophisticated information, communications and surveillance technology, the flexibility of network-centric approaches, and the accuracy of ever more advanced weaponry would transform old military doctrines and practices, rescuing war from its previous degeneracy and re-legitimizing it as a viable instrument of policy.

The 1991 Gulf War was to be a key proving ground for this model of warfare and its distinctive form of military media operations⁷. Notoriously, the signature theme of much Western television reportage of the war was the replaying of pilots' display-screen footage of the so-called 'smart' bombing technology. The dominant narrative framing such military-supplied imagery was a largely celebratory account of surgical strikes that accurately targeted and cleanly destroyed enemy locations, without obvious casualties. For Margot Norris, the effect of this militarization of audience perception, a cultural enrolment into a spectacularly martial but highly sanitised point of view, was "to make Operation Desert Storm murderously destructive yet simultaneously corpseless" (2000: 230). Exacerbated by the fact that no body counts were publicised by the US military, the dead and injured completely failed to become figures of phenomenology in the mediascape of the first Gulf War. Wounding and killing seemed hardly to exist in this abstract virtual register where targeting grids and nebulous pixelated forms flared and vanished on pilots' monitors and viewers' television screens alike. For Norris, 'the war passed through the public imagination and memory like a video phantom' (p.240), the almost total disappearance of victims' bodies from such accounts ultimately signalling 'the human body's derealisation by technological media under military control at the end of the twentieth century" (p.231).

Such hi-tech convergence of the modes of representation and destruction was central to the emergence of what James Der Derian (2009) ironically named 'virtuous war': 'Fought in the same manner as they are represented, by real-time surveillance and TV 'live feeds', virtuous wars promote a vision of bloodless, humanitarian, hygienic wars" (p.xxxi). The increasingly symbiotic networks and mimetic discourses of military practice, media surveillance, computer simulation and global militainment had led to a situation whereby "virtuous war had taken on the properties of a game, with high production values, mythic narratives, easy victories and few bodies" (p.272). As Der Derian notes, behind all the technological wizardry, the brutal slaughter of enemy combatants through intensive and repetitive bombardment certainly did not disappear. However the key strategic principle, and ideological motif, in the legitimization of this new way of war was *precision*. For Shaw (2005: 11), 'precision subsumes the violence of war under its rational schema: it contains the

bloody mess'. Precision aimed to uphold the spatial, temporal and embodied demarcations necessary for the continuation of war: between warzones and areas of peace, between 'major combat' operations and aftermath, and crucially between enemy combatant and protected civilian. Increasingly conducted under the intense multi-layered surveillance of global media, civil society and international law, Shaw argues that there were some genuine successes in recent Western wars in reducing civilian casualties through focussed targeting policies and stricter rules of engagement.⁸ However, such reductions could never be complete. Human errors and targeting mistakes, attacks on 'dual-use' infrastructure, and the proximity of military and civilian installations in urban areas all inevitably put civilians in the firing line. The resultant massacres, such as the deaths of 400 Iraqi civilians in the Amiriyah shelter during the 1991 Gulf War, precipitated some of the most important challenges to narratives of surgical war.

For Shaw (2005), an even more important guiding principle of the new way of warfighting was the specific transfer of risk away from the body of the Western soldier. The wider social relations and institutional arrangements of military power changed radically in the final decades of the twentieth century in most Western nations. Militaries became much more capital rather than labour intensive and in particular, traditional forms of mass participation in war declined and much smaller, all-volunteer professionalised militaries developed. One consequence of this was that professional soldiers, going about war as their chosen business, demanded much better protection as a central condition of their occupational service, often supported by families and veterans campaigning for a greater duty of care. In the affluent West then, it had become impossible to treat Western soldiers' bodies as standing reserve, as simple materiel, for the military machine. Troop casualties had to be minimised to within politically acceptable levels in order to maintain public support for war⁹. While this often meant relying on others to take bodily risks on the ground such as local allies or private military contractors, most importantly it meant a heightened role for technology and specifically air power. The epitome of this trend was the 1999 NATO attack on Yugoslavia during the Kosovo War - an 82-days long, exclusively aerial operation in which bombers flew at high altitude so as not to be exposed to anti-aircraft fire and consequently, not a single NATO pilot or soldier's life was lost. For Ignatieff (2001), 'the Kosovo operation is the paradigm of this paradoxical form of

warfare where technological omnipotence is vested in the hands of risk-adverse political cultures” (p.163).

The over-riding transfer of risk away from Western soldiers, even if this heightened the risks to civilians, as in the decision to bomb from a height that made bombing errors more likely, exposed Western warfighting to the accusation of moral hypocrisy, a charge often ruthlessly exploited by opponents (Shaw 2005)¹⁰. For Ignatieff (2001), any espoused humanitarian values could indeed be seen as inauthentic if bodies were not put on the line as ‘risk-free warfare presumes that our lives matter more than those we are intervening to save’ (p.162). Scarry (1985: 80) likewise highlights the profound moral dangers that are rooted in the uneven distribution of bodily knowing through war, in arguing that:

‘The dream of an absolute, one-directional capacity to injure those outside one’s territorial boundaries .. may begin to approach the torturer’s dream of absolute nonreciprocity, the dream that one will be oneself exempt from the condition of being embodied while one’s opponent will be kept in a state of radical embodiment by its awareness that it is at any moment deeply woundable’

The Martial Body

Quite apart from being vulnerable to injury and death, the embodied presence of the soldier has the potential to disrupt strategic thinking and the management of war in other ways. As Grossman (1996) notes, the vast majority of people are neither good at, nor comfortable with, the actual act of killing. The history of war is replete with examples of how those involved in face-to-face close combat exhibit ineptitude, inhibition and resistance to killing, however ideologically objectified and dehumanised the figure of the ‘enemy’ may previously have been in the militarized imagination. Overcoming such deep-seated inhibitions has thus long been a key military task - addressed through teamwork, command and ‘corporeal technologies’ such as the operant conditioning of automatic militarized reflexes (Protevi 2009). Most importantly, the ability for combatants to be able to kill whilst increasingly

physically distant from each other, enabled by numerous classes of weaponry from firearms and artillery to aerial bombing and remote-controlled drones, crucially also serves to keep them detached from each other's moral universes.¹¹

As numerous humanist accounts of wartime experiences emphasise, it is when corporeal co-presence occurs that the boundaries of enmity and friendship may blur, and an alternative empathetic recognition of humanity, often rooted in bodily frailty and mutual vulnerability, may emerge. Embodiment thus risks the contingency of unforeseen shared sensory and affective experiences that may undermine the binary oppositions that war sets up (Cole 2009). Malesevic (2010) summarizes the ironic lesson of war as being that the further away you are from the frontline, the more likely you are to hate the enemy. From a strategic point of view then, the affordances of destruction at a distance lie not just in overcoming any physical limitations on the soldier's body in the delivery of force, but also in terms of overcoming the moral requirements that, in Levinas' (1969) terms, are inevitably demanded by an encounter with the Face of the other.

A crucial way in which the crisis of the soldier's body has been addressed in recent Western warfare then was by its distancing from the battlespace whenever practical. However, this is not always possible, and there have been other noteworthy trends in the ways that martial corporeality is being understood and reconfigured within contemporary Western military discourses and practices. Blackmore's (2005) analysis of the cyborg figures and assemblages that populate the cutting edge of the U.S. Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) highlights the agency's assessment that 'as combat systems become more and more sophisticated and reliable, the major limiting factor for operational dominance in a conflict is the warfighter' (DARPA cited in Blackmore 2005: 195). As such, significant on-going projects such as the U.S. Future Force Warrior Program are exploring how to both technologically augment the sensory and physical capabilities of the warfighter's body, as well as enhance their ability to endure stress and overcome emotional limitations on performance. Regimes of physiological, pharmacological and neurological monitoring and manipulation such as the Continuous Assisted Performance programme seek to extend the soldier's peak performance, overcranking the body way beyond its natural circadian rhythms.

For Blackmore, such developments are emblematic of how ‘the agency seeks Metabolic Dominance, the name of one of its most recent programs, over the human-machine’s central processing unit ... the re-created flesh must be trained and primed to survive battlespace, to match its tempo, to cycle into a war metabolism’’ (2005: 197-8). Kundnani relatedly argues that the ultimate aspiration of such military programmes is that “by linking directly into the senses and remotely monitoring a soldier's performance, feelings of fear, shame or exhaustion could be removed. What was once achieved by issuing soldiers with amphetamines will now be done remotely with greater precision" (2004: 123). Twenty-first century military techno-scientific discourses are thus attempting to reconstitute martial corporeality in such a way as to overcome the various susceptibilities of the human body, ‘the cyborg soldier eviscerating and erasing the messiness and excess that makes embodied experience potentially subversive’ (Masters 2010: 9). For Väliäho (2012: 76), this ‘circle of biohuman warrior production’ includes the development of technologies such as Virtual Iraq, a virtual reality system designed to recalibrate the emotional regulation of veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder via the ‘operational retraining’ of neurobiological functionality and affect programs.

A further significant transformation in the imagination of martial presence relates to how the ‘warfighter’ is increasingly understood as a distributed entity - whose sensory activity is remotely accessed, interpreted and fed back, whose situational awareness and lethal capacity is fundamentally a function of the flexible networks within which they are embedded. Such network-centric thinking marks ‘a shift from individual military actors or units to radical relationality; from viewing actors as independent operators to viewing them as part of continuously adapting military systems operating in constantly changing battlespaces’ (Dillon 2002: 72). The soldier is predominantly envisaged as a permanently connected, interoperable and flexible ‘platform’ for the delivery of force, whereby "it is not that the soldier is influenced by the weapons used; now he or she is reconstructed and reprogrammed to fit integrally into the weapon systems" (Gray 1997: 195). In Dillon’s analysis of the long-term strategic thinking informing the US military’s Joint Vision 2020, he argues that ‘the military body, its appetites, forms and desires, its entire sensorium’ is being further transformed via the articulation of the digital revolution in ICT with the molecular

revolution in the biological life sciences, becoming re-imagined and reconfigured as a code-based military body 'in-formation' that is endlessly protean, re-figurable and adaptive. (2003: 139)

Counterinsurgency and Biopolitics

While such military futurism is concerned with developing ever more technologically sophisticated ways to overcome the problematic status of the human body in the battlespace, the emerging realities on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan in the first decade of the twenty-first century fundamentally shook the faith in the RMA's high-tech, low personnel vision of warfare. Following the initial success of the invasion of Iraq, the subsequent occupation conspicuously failed to be embraced as liberation, and an occupying force that was radically underprepared for the re-emergence of asymmetric warfare and sectarian conflict became engaged in a bloody, shape-shifting and protracted campaign. The American military found itself 'moving in a trickster landscape where it was hard to distinguish insurgents from the rest of the population' (Gregory 2010: 267). The insurgency was marked by the use of bodies as weapons - the embrace of martyrdom rather than risk-aversion in suicide bombings - and the proliferation of viscerally corporeal tactics such as broadcasted beheadings. For Appadurai (2006) this 'return of the body of the patriot, the martyr and the sacrificial victim into the spectre of mass violence' (p.12) dramatized an opposition to those 'spaces of death and destruction that have become unimaginably abstract' (p.13).

Rather than simply focussing on the elusive and spectral figure of the insurgent, the eventual military response, as explicitly laid out in the Petraeus doctrine of counterinsurgency operations (U.S. Army 2007), was to problematize the entire population. Counterinsurgency was to become an intrinsically biopolitical project that aimed to develop detailed sociocultural knowledge of the population and to subsequently deploy culturally sensitive strategies of emotional engagement and affective governance to shape 'hearts and minds'¹². By opening up the entire body politic to assay and intervention, counterinsurgency aimed to cultivate subjectivities more equipped to deal with continuous emergency, to change the social forms into

which any grievances might be channelled, and ultimately to better ‘distinguish between those whose dispositions can be improved and made safe and those who must be eliminated’ (Bell 2009: 12). Petraeus argued that ‘Soldiers and Marines are expected to be nation builders as well as warriors’ (U.S. Army 2007, Foreword), signalling a new confluence between war-fighting and post-interventionary peace-building, governance and development (Duffield 2001, 2007; Reid 2006; Dillon and Reid 2009) and the involvement of other bodies – development staff, NGO workers, civilian police and security personnel, private contractors, academics - in the battlespace.

Although heralded in some quarters as a new and gentler mode of embodying force, even a counter-revolution in military affairs where ‘some of the best weapons for counterinsurgents do not shoot’ (US Army 2007, 1-153), the actual conduct of counterinsurgency operations has had significant continuity with the major developments of the RMA (Gregory 2010). The move towards more flexible forces was facilitated by further reliance upon technologically advanced remote sensing and weapon systems including ‘unmanned’ drones, as well as the vastly extended support of private military contractors. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan became increasingly dependent upon the ability of private corporations to embody ‘surge capacity’ - flexibly and just-in-time - through their extensive databases of specialist contractors with ‘militarized somatic memory’ (Higate, this volume). Furthermore, although the argument that ‘sociocultural knowledge can reduce the need for kinetic force during a counterinsurgency’ (McFate 2010: 193) was prominent in doctrinal and media discussions, in practice there was little such reduction – indeed, air strikes increased rapidly during the surge (Gregory 2010).

The cultural turn in counterinsurgency was not simply a paradigm shift within military thinking however, but can also be understood in terms of a wider domestic campaign to sustain the legitimacy of war, a remarkably overt attempt to ‘change public perceptions of the nature of warfare itself’ (Gregory 2010: 277). This was particularly important following the revelation of the strategies of abjection that were deployed on the naked, leashed and tortured bodies of Muslim men in American custody at Abu Ghraib. Counterinsurgency was mediated for the American public through a distinctive and altogether more reassuring affective and visual ecology

where the ‘iconic figures are gentle soldiers and grateful recipients’ (Gregory 2010a: 165), with much media attention focussing on doctrine and the training scenarios that attempted to script the bodily performance of soldiers in culturally appropriate ways in their daily interactions with the population - listening attentively, drinking tea appropriately, interacting with women and children respectfully (Anderson 2011). Such highlighting of doctrine, training and this gentler form of military action deflected attention from, and foreclosed analysis of, the continuing centrality of kinetic force, physical violence and bodily suffering and indignity to actual counterinsurgency practices. The cultural turn can thus be read as another modality in the on-going attempt at ‘the re-enchantment of war’ (Coker 2004, Behnke 2006, Gregory 2010), one with a heightened accent upon the embodiment of reassurance soldiering rather than a simple faith in the virtues of advanced technology. Despite the emphasis upon liberal transformations in the wider affective governance of occupied populations, an unremitting corporeal violence lies at the heart of contemporary counterinsurgency operations (Dauphinee & Masters 2007, Dillon 2008, Dillon and Reid 2009, Anderson 2012). Indeed, as Dillon notes, the biopolitical administration of life always implies an associated necropolitics: ‘making life live is a lethal business’ (2008: 167).

Embodiment and ‘New Wars’

This chapter has so far concentrated on some of the transformations in the modes of embodiment, and the persistent disavowal of bodily mutilation, associated in particular with Western campaigns and ways of war. Clearly, the arguments made do not necessarily apply to other conflicts, such as those that Mary Kaldor (1999) categorises as ‘new wars’¹³. Although not an explicit focus of Kaldor’s analysis, new wars have been particularly associated with specific embodied experiences of victimhood such as displacement, confinement to camps, starvation and visceral assaults on bodily integrity. Mbembe (2003), for example argues that recent conflicts in Africa, where many postcolonial states’ monopolies of violence have been fundamentally eroded, have been characterised by ‘technologies of destruction that have become more tactile, more anatomical and sensorial’ (p.34). These include publically visible and admonitory assaults on bodily integrity such as the severing of

limbs and the deliberate production of abject bodies through systematic campaigns of sexual violence and rape (see also e.g. Olujnic 1998, Diken and Lautsen 2005, Baaz and Stern 2009, Leatherman, 2011). Anthropological literature on genocidal violence in Burundi and Rwanda (e.g. Malkki 1995, Taylor 1999) has relatedly emphasized how acts of atrocity have been perpetrated and narrated in a particular manner, converging on specific body parts, that is not merely instrumental but expressive of a dehumanizing discourse that connects putative physical with moral difference.

New wars are also associated with specific modes of embodiment, such as the military masculinities of the warlord and the mercenary or ‘marauder’ (Sofsky 2004). At the intersection of both victimhood and perpetration, a crucial corporeal assemblage of many predatory new wars is the Kalashnikov-wielding child-soldier¹⁴. For example, in the Sierra Leone civil war in the 1990s, it is estimated that up to 80% of the Revolutionary United Front rebel forces were aged between 7 and 14 (Denov 2010).¹⁵ Although African conflicts have been the focus of limited media coverage in the West (Pawson 2007), such attention that there has been has often focussed on the child soldier as the iconic figure - an object of both sympathy and horror - in the hegemonic framing of such wars as gratuitous, alien and often incomprehensible.

Such pathologised portrayals over-simplify the complex realities of such conflicts and of the children who have been caught up in them (McKay and Mazurna 2004). The stock media evocation of horror and compassion is often at the expense of any more nuanced exploration of how such wars are experienced, understood and even contested by those rendered as ‘victims’ (Chan 2011). Relatedly, Gregory (2010a) cautions that the entire representational, and analytic, opposition between ‘uncivilized’ new wars and ‘the sterilised battle spaces of the RMA’ (p.169) ultimately sustains a rhetorical privileging of the latter. In contrast to the passion, tradition, and criminality that analysts like Kaldor emphasize as features of so-called ‘new wars’, the Western way of war is by implication seen as more rational, modern, surgical and ultimately more legitimate. Gregory’s principal concern is that such an overarching discursive frame may further foreshorten critical examination of the already disavowed mutilation and lethality of Western wars. That force is embodied and experienced distinctively in different wars, including those heuristically categorised as ‘new wars’ or Western wars, is undoubtedly true. However, seeing such differences simply in

terms of a stark dichotomy between visceral corporeality and disembodied rationality - ‘war made flesh’ versus ‘war without bodies’ – is certainly a reductive and unhelpful discursive framing. Ultimately, only a nuanced approach that pays detailed analytic attention to the specificities of how war is embodied and experienced across all constituencies within particular conflicts can avoid this potential problem.

Summary

War has been a ubiquitous and central feature of modernity and modern social life, and it shows little sign of declining in importance in the twenty first century. War affects countless lives, occupying bodies in a multitude of locations and temporalities, and via registers from the mundane to the spectacular. War lives and breeds through a panoply of sensory, affective and embodied experiences, from the daily mortifications, fears and existential anxieties that define the everyday life-world of civilians in dirty wars¹⁶ to the cravings for the intensity, exhilaration and camaraderie of professional warfighting that become the emotional sediment underpinning the crucial global institution of private military contracting.

And yet, the intertwining of war and the body has been an object of limited and sporadic attention within the academy rather than a central and sustained theoretical and analytic concern with clear disciplinary patterns. Writing of the war-focussed discipline of International Relations, Jabri argues that bodies ‘are not deemed to constitute the subject-matter of a mature discipline that concerns itself with the abstractions of the international system’ (2006: 825).¹⁷ While a renewed concern with the embodiment of human life and social action has been an extremely productive feature of the social sciences in recent decades, the topics of war and militarism have largely been notable by their absence from this particular corporeal turn. The body at war has thus been subject to a series of erasures in academic discourse.

As detailed in this introduction, in a dynamic attempt to continue the legitimization of war despite the inevitable revelations and reminders of its enduring degeneracy, various bodies at war have also been subject to a series of strategic transformations, augmentations, renderings and disavowals within prominent military traditions of

thinking and strategic discourses. The differential structuring of affective responses through allied political and media discourses means that, as Butler (2009) notes, it is only certain ‘bodies that matter’ during wartime, only certain bodies that are ‘grievable’, that count and are counted. It is perhaps within humanist war literature - attuned to the precarious phenomenological status of all bodily life in wartime and more fundamentally oriented to attempting to make sense of the past rather than understanding war within the telos of future policy - that the embodied experience of war has emerged most clearly as a salient and important theme of public discussion¹⁸. The elegiac reconstruction of the horrors of past wars in literature and written testimonies haunted the twentieth century and continues to do so into the twenty-first. The enduring corporeal aftermaths and embodied memories of the innumerable victims of war also haunt the quotidian spaces of countless private lives.

In terms of thematic organisation, this book is structured around three core but fundamentally interlinked concerns – preparation for war, the practice of war, and corporeal aftermaths. *Part One: Militarizing Bodies* explores the discourses, techniques and metaphors through which war occupies and prepares bodies for war and how militarist principles and ideals are inculcated, and resisted, in civilian life. *Part Two: Embodying War* is particularly concerned with the embodied practices and sensory regimes of warfighting, and with thinking through recent developments in warfare via a focus on transformations in the associated modes of embodiment. *Part Three: Corporeal Aftermaths* focuses on the social, political and ethical dimensions of various post-war bodies and traumas, investigating the embodiment of war memories and contested discourses and practices of bodily reconstruction, rehabilitation and memorialisation.

Militarizing Bodies

The opening section begins with an analysis of the classic site of militarization, Basic Training. Emma Reilly’s chapter, *Preparing and resisting the war body: training in the British Army*, focuses on the British conscript army of the Second World War. She explores the embodied regimes by which civilians were turned into soldiers, through which military values were instilled, and resisted, during initial training.

Reilly suggests that there were two stages to this process: control and transformation. The army first sought to establish authority over the recruit's body through detailed surveillance of dress, hygiene, diet, sexual behaviour, and personal movement. Discipline and order were established through bodily routines from shaving, regardless of whether or not it was necessary, to shining shoes until recruits could see their image reflected back at them. Control extended from exterior appearances and behaviours to the elementary interior regulation of the guts, with regimens of feeding and resting designed to standardise 'the opening of the bowels'. Relationships to the body became instrumentalised. Masturbation was to be undertaken as a deliberate action to ensure long-term sexual self-control, rather than for pleasure. Soldiers were constantly inspected so that such bodily routines became more and more habituated and ingrained. Once control was achieved, instructors then attempted to transform the harnessed body into a more effective and predictable fighting machine, using drill, physical exercise and battle training, in order to render it fitter, more productive, and ultimately self-regulating. The ability to cope with such demands and transformations often became increasingly central to a soldier's sense of self. However, Reilly shows that the army recruit was not simply a subjected being, a docile body passively adjusting to military impositions. Drawing upon a selection of soldiers' personal testimonies, in the form of oral histories, letters and diaries, she highlights the range of public and private tactics men developed to counter the demands being placed upon them, often mocking the military hierarchy from within. These included public acts of opposition, such as malingering, self-inflicting wounds and the ultimate reclamation of one's own body, suicide, as well as embodied behaviours such as cross-dressing and the development of sexual relationships that crossed the boundaries of traditional army hierarchies. In highlighting these attempts to pursue their own agendas, resistances that often operated within the extant relations of power, Reilly draws attention to the agency of the embodied social actor and the fact that the body is ultimately an unstable object for power.

Tamara Ehs' chapter, *Steeling the body for war in Austrofascist education*, analyses the training of bodies across a different political system. She recounts a significant moment in Austrian history when measures were introduced to transform the 'feeble bodies' of townsfolk, deemed in the eyes of a new totalitarian government to reflect physical and moral degeneration, into stalwart 'steel bodies' prepared for the glory of

future wars. Ehs draws particular attention to the influential fascist theories of Othmar Spann, whose corporatist social philosophy stressed ‘intuitive universalism’ and an organic body politic above the individual body, as well as the work of his doctoral student Bernhard Schleich, whose important thesis ‘Fitness for military service and its economical and sociological meaning’ glorified the ‘steely bodies’ of the rural population as “wehrhaftes Volk” (a well-fortified people). At Spann’s midsummer celebrations, prefigurations of later organized summer camps, disciples were trained to experience his doctrines physically, ‘the ability to intuit essences .. nurtured by jumping over the fire’. As the fascist state developed, more formal links between physical and ideological education were forged to inculcate holistic, totalitarian demands. Sports clubs, and the curricula of elementary and secondary education, were militarized. The initial enemy to be struggled against was weakness, men and boys trained to disdain feeble bodies as reflecting weakness of will and mind. They were to transform themselves, to learn discipline, self-control and courage, to become potential instruments of war, through sport, drill and rigorous regimes of exercise. With pure intellect deemed suspect, a law was passed decreeing that all university students had to take part in compulsory pre-military exercises at summer camps before being allowed to take their final exams. Ehs details how bodily regimes and aesthetics were a crucial idiom for the inculcation of Austrofascist values and a martial telos, the emergence of the fascist state concomitant with a shift in corporeal intuition from the individual body to the “Volkskörper” (body of the nation), with the ultimate “steeling of the body” to take place in war.

The specific relationship between militarization and dietary matters, as manifested in concerns about the suitability of particular bodies for military service is the focus of the next chapter, *Too Fat To Fight? Obesity, Bio-Politics and the Militarization Of Children’s Bodies*, by Joseph Burrridge and Kevin McSorley. In this chapter, we note that there has been a shifting yet continual emphasis upon diet as a site of political and governmental concern throughout the twentieth century right up to the present day, where childhood obesity has recently been characterised in the United States as an emerging security risk. To this end, we focus upon a recent report entitled *Too Fat to Fight*, written by the organisation *Mission: Readiness* and designed to influence the passage of legislation in the United States commonly referred to as the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act*. The report articulates a concern that contemporary American

diets are producing a situation in which too many young people will not meet the US military's criteria for entry and will therefore be 'too fat to fight'. Drawing upon a broadly Foucauldian understanding of biopolitics, emphasising both responsabilisation and anticipatory action, we explore various facets of the arguments made in this report, including how childhood is constructed as a legitimate site for intervention. The logic of the report is also explored in the context of an all-volunteer military force and a contemporary situation where any straightforward equation of the activities that constitute Western 'fighting' with simple physical prowess is questionable. We argue that *Too Fat To Fight* is indicative of a profound remilitarization of the everyday in the last decade, where the militarized state's pre-emptive gaze is not only directed outwards but also turns inwards. This anticipatory, bio-political strategy of military mobilisation is in line with wider pacific, neo-liberal discourses of health and body image, but we argue that it is not primarily a direct response to the straightforward corporeal needs of the contemporary military. The logics of *Too Fat To Fight* can be best understood in terms of what we call 'banal militarism' – a form of generalized military recruitment that is increasingly affective and embodied.

In the final chapter in this section, *Military chic: Fashioning civilian bodies for war*, Jane Tynan relatedly explores various ways in which clothing may act as an important idiom of militarization, through which particular military values may be expressed and become a mundane part of everyday civilian life. She firstly suggests that the military body holds a particular fascination for fashion discourses and media. From high fashion's playful referencing of spectacular pre-modern military styles to contemporary urban wear's looking to the modern battlefield for inspiration, a concern with war and the military has long been an acceptable focus for civilian dress. Tynan draws attention to the phenomenon of 'military chic', the increased prominence of military themes, designs and motifs on the catwalk and the high street in recent years, arguing that fashion's recent pre-occupation with military clothing and motifs is explicable in terms of an exploitation of the subversive potential of violence, a nostalgia for an elitist culture of spectacle, as well as a consumerist fascination with the capacity of uniform to suggest bodily transformation, discipline and improvement. Secondly, Tynan explores how uniform has become a central focus for the mobilization and expression of public support, and anxieties, surrounding particular military engagements. In both official and popular discourses,

discussion of the fitness for purpose of military uniform, and potential technical improvements to its design, has become a key site where care for the soldier's body and fears around military vulnerability may be articulated. In both of these developments, Tynan suggests that clothing has become an increasingly important idiom through which a wider public interest in military values and models of social organization can be discerned.

Embodying War

In the opening chapter of this section, *On patrol: the embodied phenomenology of Infantry*, John Hockey explores the ensemble of corporeal competencies and sensory activities that infantry troops manifest as they go about their work. Drawing on ethnographic data, Hockey points to how the senses become militarized, attuned particularly to the discernment of enmity and threat, perceptions reframed in terms of issues of life and death. He details the development of suspicious sensory practices, including a heightened monitoring of the traces of one's own presence, across the sensorium: olfactory awareness of lingering enemy smells; auditory alertness to changes in the mundane soundscape that might signal enemy presence, such as uncanny silence; a cynical way of seeing that is constantly monitoring, parsing terrain in terms of potential protection and peril. Hockey also details the skilful coordinated choreography of patrol, its acute sense of communal time and secure collective movement; the endless weapons drills that establish a pre-reflective relationship with one's rifle, so ingrained and free of hesitation that the rifle is ultimately thought and felt an extension of the body; and the haptic adaptations to nature that foster a capacity to 'soldier on' as adversity, cold and fatigue seize bodies. Drawing on conceptual resources from philosophical phenomenology and the sociology of embodiment, Hockey argues that infantry display a specific kind of corporeal engagement with the world and come to inhabit a very particular 'somatic mode of attention'. This is encapsulated by the occupational exclamation 'Switch on', habitually used by instructors and troops themselves. For Hockey, 'this single utterance invokes the embodied world particular to infantry', its paramount concern being that troops invoke all the sensory skills and conduct needed to be thoroughly attuned to a perilous environment. Hockey also details a general subcultural

perception of the ultimate unreliability of complicated technical equipment, typically deemed ‘not soldier proof’, and hence a further emphasis among troops upon the necessity of developing and maintaining core sensory-based skills of soldiering.

In the next chapter, *‘Switching on’ for cash: the Private Militarized Security contractor as geo-corporeal actor*, Paul Higate analyzes the burgeoning Private Military Security (PMS) industry. The market for force and security has grown dramatically in recent decades, with tens of thousands of former military personnel being employed in Iraq and Afghanistan during the peak years of occupation, and shares in PMS companies growing exponentially over this time. Higate shows how this enrollment of private military contractors into supporting wider geo-strategic objectives can be understood in terms of the provision of specialized embodied capital. The PMS industry is fundamentally dependent upon prior military training and in particular, the tenacity of militarized somatic memory, including the modes of sensation and situational awareness that Hockey discusses and the automatic enactment of specific corporeal repertoires under conditions of great stress. Higate initially traces numerous trajectories between military and post-military life, arguing that many such transitions can be usefully characterized in terms of various lines of embodied continuity - both destructive and adaptive - such as ‘soldiering on’ with problems, rekindling adrenalinized experiences, or seeking particular occupational cultures that are also reliant upon the masculinized camaraderie of the soldierly habitus. He then explores a number of embodied skill-sets in the PMS industry, identifying the deployment of both ‘high’ and ‘low profile’ bodily performances. While the aggressive, high profile ‘Blackwater look’ represents one notable security style, Higate also notes the occurrence of more discrete bodily performances. These more inconspicuous, unthreatening performances attempt to be more in tune with the local embodied landscape, assimilating body language, habits, dress and emotional restraint into their everyday repertoires of security practice, while remaining capable of rapid and potentially lethal response when required. Higate highlights the resilience of military-masculine bodily transformations, how latent and durable dispositions lodged deep in the body lie at the heart of recent privatized transformations in the delivery of security and force, and how militarized somatic memory is thus a crucial economic and political resource.

As Higate notes, the lodging of lethal skills and capacities deep in body-selves is a risky business, for the controlled discharge of such militarized reflexes cannot always be guaranteed. In *Affect, agency and responsibility: the act of killing in the age of cyborgs*, John Protevi explores the complex issue of responsibility when soldiers kill, drawing on diverse material from neuroscience to political philosophy. He argues firstly for a widespread inhibition towards killing among humans, and that the vast majority of soldiers only do so in de-subjectified states, e.g. in the grip of pre-cognitive reflexes, or ‘affect programs’ such as rage or panic that overcome the subject. Given this, Protevi asks, ‘who does the killing when reflexes, rages and panics are activated?’, arguing that our models of causality and responsibility need to consider not only individual subjectivities, but also ‘emergent assemblages that skip subjectivity and directly conjoin larger groups and the somatic’. For Protevi, the military unit may be directly intertwined with non-subjective reflexes and basic emotions in such a way as to bypass the soldier’s individual subjectivity *qua* controlled intentional action: ‘In these cases the practical agent of killing is not the individual person, but the emergent assemblage of military unit and non-subjective reflex or equally non-subjective “affect program.”’ Protevi argues that the free-fire ‘shoot on sight’ protocols of Vietnam-era infantry training implanted a practical agent of killing – a ‘hunter agent’ - at a distributed and emergent group level, utilizing individual soldiers’ conditioned responses to the recognition of human-shaped silhouettes. He also proposes the constitution of widely distributed cognition, and an emergent group subject, in contemporary digital simulator training and technologically-advanced, networked soldiering. However, Protevi notes that, when separate from the group, individual soldiers often retrospectively take guilt upon themselves for killing, conferring moral agency upon themselves even when practical agency arguably lies elsewhere, beyond individual conscious intention. He argues that fundamental, pro-social mechanisms of proto-empathetic identification, triggered by the sight of the blood and guts of the enemy, may partially explain this tenacious ‘centripetal’ constitution of the individual subject, the assumption of moral responsibility for acts never committed in isolation. More generally, his chapter emphasises the often direct and unreflective connection of the political with the embodied and the affective, a ‘political physiology’ that may illuminate the understanding of wider war-related phenomena.

In the following chapter, *Grammars of violence, modes of embodiment and frontiers of the subject*, Kevin McDonald relatedly explores the significance of various aspects of somatic apprehension for contemporary transformations in violence and war, including analysing those embodied states associated with consuming extreme, pornographic and thanatographic visual media, and the associated construction of alternative public spheres around particular flows of affect and embodied experience, rather than around deliberative debate. McDonald initially notes that there is increasing evidence that we are experiencing the end of a model of war premised upon a separation of zones of war and zones of peace, combatant and non-combatant, civilian and military. He argues that these transformations may be understood in terms of shifts in paradigms of violence and their associated modes of embodiment, and productively analysed in terms of different experiential ‘grammars of violence’. Drawing particularly upon analysis of recent Jihadi violence, McDonald explores the significance of particular dimensions of such emergent forms of war and violence, including their temporalities, logics of scale, and forms of embodied risk; an excessive tendency for such violence to go to the extreme, beyond the limits of everyday somatic comprehension; and the emergence of an intimate, vivisectionist desire to reveal the ‘reality’ of the victim, stripping them of the mask of their humanity and making their body ‘speak’. For McDonald, violence needs to be explored in terms of such modes of embodied experience and apprehension, rather than understood as a simple instrument or strategic choice in the pursuit of some other communicative or rational political goal. He points to how recent jihadi testimony often contains little actual reference to ordinary lives and mundane political logics, but is rather structured around the physical apprehension of hidden realities, embodied encounters with the ‘extraordinary’. The body is here understood as the principal medium for apprehending the reality of the world in terms of holy war. Further, McDonald argues that such embodied transformations are not only at the centre of new forms of violence such as those associated with the global jihad, but may be equally important in understanding other war-related transformations, including those at work within the contemporary armed forces. For example, he examines how digital cameras enable the creation of private embodied experience even when engaged in public duty, pointing to the integration of the Abu Ghraib victims into the violent pornographic imaginary of their torturers. For McDonald, war is becoming less and less understandable in terms of modern roles and institutions,

and can no longer be thought of as apart from other areas of social life, separated by geographic isolation or professionalization. Rather, it increasingly consists of complex forms of embodiment, dual movements of private experience into war, and war into private experience. McDonald argues that we increasingly encounter flows of experience where war extends into other zones and traverses embodied subjectivities in ways that we are only beginning to understand. The salience of distant violence, its embodied reception, and the types of public spheres and imaginaries constructed around it are increasingly important encounters in a world where the old borders established to contain war and its violence no longer hold. For McDonald, analysis that focuses on exploring such grammars of violence and the associated modes and flows of embodied experience is crucial to illuminate our understanding of the increasingly rapid and complex transformations and configurations of contemporary war.

The final chapter in this section, Rachel Woodward and Neil Jenkins' *Soldiers' bodies and the contemporary British military memoir* explores one particular 'body genre' which helps define how we think about war, through which particular affective and embodied experiences of war enter the wider public sphere - soldiers' memoirs of war and life in the armed forces. Woodward and Jenkins note that bodies are an integral feature of military memoirs. Such accounts typically convey a sense of the sheer physical demands of military roles and tasks, the volatile pressures of having multiple bodies highly trained in lethal violence working and living together, and the shock and horror of graphic encounters with dead and damaged bodies. Woodward and Jenkins note how a key motif in these accounts is the impossibility of civilian understanding of such lived experiences, of knowing otherwise what war is really like, thus establishing the privileged 'visceral authority' of the author's physical presence. Their analysis then focuses on two recent accounts of British soldiers' experiences in the ongoing Afghanistan war that both centre on the wounded military body and eventual recovery from potentially fatal injury. Woodward and Jenkins suggest that these accounts reflect both established traditions within the genre in asserting transcendence of the injuries of war, as well as addressing very contemporary social concerns about the logic for, and consequences of, this particular military action. They argue that, in the turn to the personal and the corporeal, the books do not tell us much about the specifics or politics of the Afghanistan war. However, and

particularly given the high levels of public discomfort around fatality and casualty levels in this conflict, as well as in the absence of any accepted wider narrative framing about the purpose or rectitude of the war, these accounts do provide understandable and comforting stories that suggest that even when the conflict produces horror, this can be transcended. Woodward and Jenkins ultimately suggest that these embodied recovery narratives thus contribute to a wider set of cultural ideas around the Afghanistan war where there is little critical engagement with the causes and consequences of the conflict.

Corporeal Aftermaths

The final section of the collection begins with Elsbeth Bösl's chapter, *"An unbroken man despite losing an arm": Corporeal reconstruction and embodied difference – prosthetics in Western Germany after WWII*. Bösl explores the multiple logics underpinning the rehabilitation of the 1.5 million German veterans who acquired physical impairments during WWII. She argues that disabled veterans personified the question of how to come to terms with defeat, their war-damaged bodies and perceived deficiencies read as visible signs of a broken society. Although there were unquestionable economic rationales at stake in their rehabilitation, Bösl argues that underpinning the key strategy of the prosthetic renormalisation of war-damaged bodies was the desire to present a manifest symbol of the reconstruction of social and political order. The amputee fitted with prostheses was a figure of renewal, an ethos of renormalisation and reintegration into society visibly staged on a technically rebuilt body. Fitting men with prostheses was also deemed to pacify veterans who were regarded as otherwise harbouring the potential for political conflict. Bodies representing violence and bearing witness to war and National Socialism could be reconciled to the emerging democratic state. For Bösl, prosthetic rehabilitation thus bore more than just an individual meaning, it was seen as reflecting wider social and democratic reconstruction. The post-war direction of prosthetic development was also overwhelmingly towards utilitarian vocational rehabilitation rather than aesthetics or augmentation. The utopian discourse of superhuman prosthetic enhancement known from the Weimar Years, and the associated figure of the *Neuer Mensch*, had

disappeared, discredited by the experience of National Socialism. Rather, Bösl argues that prostheses were specifically designed to renormalize and remasculinise men damaged by war, affording them a demilitarized model of civil masculinity through vocational productivity. Prostheses were thus visible and tangible symbols of democratisation, pacification, and repair but also of the efficiency and integrative potential of the new state.

Julie Hartley's chapter, *War-wounds: Disability, memory and narratives of war in a Lebanese disability rehabilitation hospital*, also addresses the organisation and provision of care for the war disabled, but within a very specific context in which various sectarian militias assumed many of the responsibilities, and the symbolic capital, of the state in caring for 'their' veterans. Hartley examines the stories and experiences of some of the long-term residents of a rehabilitation hospital set up during the Lebanese Civil War to care for war-wounded soldiers from a Christian militia. She argues that the particular ways in which residents discussed their disability and the violence of the past was especially important within the context of contemporary Lebanon's so-called 'collective amnesia' – the state-sponsored and socially accepted imperative to 'forget' the atrocities of the civil war after 1990. While this past was deliberately repressed in wider public discourse, Hartley demonstrates how contentious memories of conflict and even complicity in violence were openly expressed within everyday hospital life. She argues that these stories need to be understood as purposeful and strategic reconstructions, where the ex-militia fighters communally refashioned themselves as heroes whose bodies had been worth sacrificing. Such narratives of war and disability were incompatible with wider 'modern' and avowedly non-sectarian rejections of war as meaningless. The discourse through which the residents of the hospital rationalised their war-wounds was essentially at odds with these wider attempts of the contemporary Lebanese state to heal itself by forgetting the sectarian past, and with associated secular notions of disability rights that did not distinguish between different forms of disability and did not privilege the war-wounded as being more 'worthy'. Indeed, Hartley argues that the choice of some long-term residents to remain in the hospital was partially motivated by the fact that to leave would mean that they would have to leave behind the very thing that made their disability meaningful, and instead join the ranks of the 'naturally' disabled. Hartley thus draws attention to the ways in which the body is

lived and experienced, within this particular institutional context, not just as disabled, but as specifically and meaningfully war-disabled.

Debates about what constitutes a war-disabled body are at the heart of Catherine Trundle's chapter, *Memorializing the veteran body: New Zealand nuclear test veterans and the search for military citizenship*. In the late 1950s servicemen from New Zealand, Britain and Fiji participated in 'Operation Grapple,' a series of British nuclear bomb tests in the Pacific. Decades later many of these 'test veterans' claim to suffer from multiple health problems such as cancers and sterility due to radiation exposure, and have been involved in lengthy and ongoing legal battles for recognition and compensation. Trundle argues that in making their claims for compensation test veterans must contend with what socially and legally constitutes a deserving wounded military body. Military pensions and compensation laws have historically assumed the legitimacy of particular theatres of activity and certain injuries. An amputee wounded in active war duty is the quintessential deserving veteran body and their claims for support are usually straightforward: the sacrifice to the nation is visibly inscribed on the body, and the illness is socially symbolic of war. However, Trundle notes that for Operation Grapple veterans, proving that their bodies were indeed soldier sacrifices is fraught with problems. They took part in 'peace-time' military activities in the 'idyllic Pacific' and their injuries often did not manifest for 30 years, making it scientifically hard to link them to a military theatre. Trundle draws attention to the quotidian spaces and relational interactions, from doctor's consultation rooms to discussions with MPs, through which their sacrifice is enacted or denied. She specifically explores the legal, scientific and ethical discourses through which the test veterans seek to recast their bodies in terms of on-going, unfinished and largely unrewarded military sacrifices deserving of nationalist memorialization and veneration. Trundle argues that their efforts are not merely individual quests for financial compensation, but collective attempts to acknowledge shared bodily suffering and gain societal recognition. Their claims both reinforce the sacrificial military body as essential to the reproduction of the nation, while simultaneously challenging the types of harmed bodies that fall within such a category. Trundle ultimately proposes a theory of *military citizenship*, arguing that the reciprocal engagement between the state and its service personnel is in reality

unevenly distributed based on specific cultural assumptions of legitimate service, moral deservedness and bodily vulnerability.

The themes of memorialisation and military-civil relations are further explored in Michael Drake's chapter, *The war dead and the body politic: Rendering the dead soldier's body in the new global (dis)order*. Drake initially draws attention to the function of mourning in the formation of collective imaginaries and how the bodies of the war dead have historically figured as an unequivocal symbol of national sacrifice, symbolizing the body politic in the formation and maintenance of national imaginaries. However, he argues that in the era of globalization, with the erosion of the ontological certainties of national, political and cultural independence, parades, tributes and ritual burials of the war dead are no longer so fixed in meaning and have become potential theatres of political contention. This is particularly so given the context of modern professionalized armies, where the 'sacrifice' is more specifically personal than that of the conscripted members of a mass citizenry. Drake then undertakes a comparative analysis of contemporary practices of repatriation and commemoration in the 'war on terror', focussing on the return of the war dead from Iraq and Afghanistan to the US and the UK. He argues that these practices signify the end of wider sociological tendencies to the demilitarization of modernity that characterised the period from 1945-2001, and that, overall, the war on terror has produced a reversal of these previously prevailing trends – a remilitarization of civic life and public culture. However, he notes that there are also distinct differences in the reception of the war dead in the US and the UK, underpinned by distinct characterisations of the military role as sacrifice and as service respectively. For Drake, it is a re-evaluation of the military role in terms of ethical professional service that is the key to understanding the way in which the UK public has come to acquiesce with the continuing war, through identification with 'the troops' despite the fact that the war itself may be the subject of widespread public disapproval. Drake argues that this apparent paradox is performatively exemplified in the 'invented ritual' of the public procession of the war dead through the UK town of Wootton Bassett. For Drake, the differences between US and UK memorialisation ultimately illustrate a distinct body politic, distinct civil-military relations, and even a different war. He argues that the UK version of the 'war on terror' project is presented not as an ideological or sacral struggle, but as a technical necessity of government. In the US,

commemoration in the premise that the dead gave their lives in pursuit of some greater cause appropriates the war dead as sacrifice, investing their sacrificial value in further war. Drake argues that in the UK, eulogising the war dead as good professionals ‘just doing their job’ may do the same for a different, but no less endless, project.

The affective force of war, public and private experiences of loss, and the complicated ways in which memories of war are embodied, denied and passed on across the generations are the themes of the final chapter in this section, Victor Seidler’s *Bodies, Masculinities and Complex Inheritances*. Seidler asks, ‘What unspoken legacies of war do we carry silently as embodied narratives that shape the lives that we live? What are the war stories that we have inherited and how do they play themselves out in our lives?’ He notes how public narratives of victory often limit spaces for mourning, and how dominant models of stoical masculinity have meant that terrible and haunting stories of war often remain unspoken, particularly within the everyday spaces of families. And yet, Seidler notes that at the same time as learning that there were questions that should not be asked, family members nonetheless often absorb these unspoken war-related fears and anxieties into their bodies. Through personal reflection, Seidler explores these complex embodied inheritances and non-linear memories, how the emotional sediments of war may be disavowed, carried inside and reproduced in different layers of experience. His chapter argues that we need to learn to listen to these different layers of our own embodied experience, to disentangle the complex inheritances that we silently carry in our bodies, as we shape different visions of identity and difference that resonate with larger histories of suffering.

In the conclusion to the volume, I consider the collection as a whole and highlight some of the themes that cut across the chapters and the future directions that analysis of the intertwining of war and the body might take.

Notes

¹ As numerous testimonies of war emphasize, the myriad ways in which war is felt and experienced comprise not only nervousness, hardship, trauma and heartache, but also intensity, exhilaration, pride and addiction (see e.g. Loyd 2000).

² This is particularly the case if we understand the body as processual rather than a fixed entity that one has. For Frank (1991: 96), 'The body .. is not an entity, but the process of its own being'. See also Latour 2004, Blackman 2008.

³ For example, Cho (2008) describes how Korean women living in the United States, including those who were not even alive during the Korean War, remain haunted by the conflict. She argues that trauma passes across generations and across the diaspora as a fundamentally bodily way of knowing what is often unspeakable and otherwise unacknowledged grief. See also Kidron (2009) on the embodied transmission of Holocaust trauma across generations.

⁴ This may particularly be the case since the inception of the U.S. led '*war on terror*', a potentially indefinite and pre-emptive campaign articulated and legitimated explicitly in terms of the broad regulation of affect, rather than in terms of specific geopolitical war aims. The effects of this campaign have been extremely wide-ranging, both internationally and across the domestic front of U.S. Homeland Security. The affective modulation of the domestic population, via biopolitical techniques such as graded national terror alerts, has become an increasingly important element of contemporary governance (Massumi 2005, Protevi 2009). Stoler (2007) relatedly discusses the history of such 'affective states', pointing to how the political rationalities of colonial authorities were grounded in assessing the distribution of sentiments, particularly those thought to be 'contagious', amongst the population and fashioning specific techniques of affective control.

⁵ Despite the maxim that war is mere policy becoming seen as Clausewitz' key position on war, his overall analysis was in fact far more complex, bleak and prescriptive than this oft-repeated gnomonic description suggests (Mansfield 2008). Clausewitz identified a remorseless will-to-violence and a tendency to the absolute situation as the essence of war, and was ultimately concerned to understand how this could be subordinated to diplomacy.

⁶ As C.W. Mills (1958) argues, the hegemonic discourse of politics that often accompanies the coming of war is one of 'crackpot realism', a hard-nosed dismissive language of practical next steps that is ultimately self-fulfilling in shifting the locus of highly complex political problems to the strategic and military domain.

⁷ Much critical academic commentary has focussed on interrogating this intersection between military practice and the media representation of war. For example, Michael Mann (1987) argues that mass-participation militarism has been replaced in the West by a passive form of enlistment that he names 'spectator-sport' militarism. For Michael Ignatieff, 'when war becomes a spectator sport, the media become the decisive theater of operations' (2001: 191). Governments and militaries thus now utilise sophisticated media operations and 'perception management' strategies in the 'battle of the narrative' (United States Joint Force Command 2008), trying to ensure minimal disruption to the successful mediation and reception of their

preferred war stories. (See also Carruthers 2011, Cottle 2006, Maltby and Keeble 2007, Hoskins and O'Loughlin 2010, Maltby 2012)

⁸ Despite the difficulty in ascertaining accurate body counts, Shaw (2005) argues that the overall evidence is that the wars in the Gulf and Kosovo in the 1990s, and Afghanistan and Iraq in the 2000s, were not degenerate to the quantitative extent that preceding wars had been. The twentieth century trend for there to be more civilian than enemy combatant deaths was certainly reversed in the major combat phases of these wars as civilians were not directly targeted as in total wars. However, as Shaw notes, civilian deaths in the continuing violence after the conclusion of these phases, and the longer-term deaths and suffering in which the war may have been indirectly influential, necessarily trouble any overall conclusions about reduced degeneracy being the outcome of these wars.

⁹ In many recent Western conflicts, public identification lies far more strongly with 'our boys' and their families rather than with any particular national war aim. Indeed, support for the former often exists in spite of confusion about, or even hostility towards, the latter (see Drake, this volume)

¹⁰ Quite apart from this charge of hypocrisy, such risk-aversion has also become a strategic vulnerability leading directly to the targeting of the bodies of Western soldiers. For example, genocidaires specifically attacked and killed ten Belgian UN peacekeepers at the beginning of the Rwandan genocide, successfully instigating their mass withdrawal (Melvern 2006)

¹¹ Although Gregory (2011) argues that we should not fetishize distance as a moral absolute in our analysis of war. For example, one problem accompanying the increased deployment of remote-operated drones in Afghanistan is not simply that remoteness or detachment makes the killing become casual, but that in part a profound sense of intimacy with ground troops is inculcated by the immersive video feeds from the aerial platforms. He thus argues that, alongside the issues surrounding biopolitical 'pattern of life' targeting, such 'near sight' introduces its own tragic priorities and distortions into the 'kill-chain'.

¹² This 'cultural turn' in contemporary counterinsurgency (Gregory 2008) is being materially instantiated through a heterogeneous and rapidly evolving assemblage of practices and representational regimes. One important dimension is focused upon attempting to render a more intimate knowledge of local social structure and culture than that delivered by traditional surveillance and intelligence-gathering practices by mobilizing the expertise, field methods and analytic techniques of qualitative social science. David Kilcullen, the senior counterinsurgency advisor in Iraq, argues strongly for the integration of emic description and 'conflict ethnography' into counterinsurgent intelligence practice (Kilcullen 2010). One outcome of this increased emphasis on ethnographic intelligence has been the deployment of 'Human Terrain Teams' to Iraq and Afghanistan since 2007, notorious for their inclusion of 'practitioners of culture, notably anthropologists, to help in the war effort' (Jager 2007: v). For critical commentary on these developments see Kelly et al. (eds) (2010), Network of Concerned Anthropologists (2009).

¹³ For Kaldor (1999), new wars are degenerate and predatory social formations where a range of forces – decaying state Armies, paramilitaries, mercenaries, criminal gangs – sustain

themselves politically and economically through the spread of violence against ‘enemy’ civilian groups in order to displace and expel them. New war economies thus depend upon factors such as accumulation by dispossession, resource extraction, enforced labour and martial recruitment, diasporic fund-raising, the corruption of international humanitarian aid. Profit is ultimately considered as trumping ideological or ethical motivations for warfighting. Kaldor’s analysis has been extremely influential, if contentious both in terms of its descriptive utility and its normative underpinnings (see e.g. Drake 2007, Malesevic 2010, Chan 2011).

¹⁴ Indeed, successive generations of assault rifles since the 1970s have become progressively lighter and more ‘child-friendly’, by design and modification, to enable such an assemblage (Graves-Brown 2007).

¹⁵ The eventual aftermath of such pervasive forced military enrolment is the existence of significant and enduring difficulties, both at the individual and the societal level, in post-conflict reintegration and peace-building. As Warnier notes, ‘Once the child-soldier is withdrawn from the armed faction .. his sensori-affectivo-motor, psychic and discursive retraining is highly problematic, especially in view of the fact that the materialities provided for him offer nothing to be compared with the stock of violent sensations and emotions experienced when he/she was armed’ (2001: p21).

¹⁶ Scheper-Hughes (1992) suggest that where daily experience is haunted by rumours and spectres of disappearance and bodily mutilation, a climate of such ontological insecurity may take hold that it is felt and expressed in terms of a widespread loss of bodily certitude. See also Green (1995) on ‘living in a state of fear’ and Taussig (1989) on ‘terror as usual’.

¹⁷ Feminist scholarship within International Relations has been one key area where themes of embodiment, the gendering and ethnicization of bodies, and military masculinities have been more explicitly addressed as integral features of war and the worldwide structure of diplomatic, military and economic relations. See for example Enloe 2000, 2004; Zalewski and Parpart (eds) 1998; Parpart and Zalewski (eds) (2008); Cockburn 1998; Cockburn and Zarkov (eds) 2002; Zarkov 2007; Sjoberg and Via (eds) 2010.

¹⁸ The reasons underpinning war writing are complex and numerous – catharsis, ‘truth-telling’, pleasure, a duty that those who can write do so for those who cannot, an attempt to impose some verbal order on that which may otherwise seem incomprehensible (McLoughlin 2009). A further motif of much war writing is that it regularly foregrounds its own inadequacy, the impossibility of adequate sense-making in the disorientating fog of war, the futility of representation faced with the overwhelming reality of war. Partly because of this, modern war writing’s search for some meaningful grounding has consistently led to a focus upon ‘the physical ordeal and the indignities war imposes on the body’ (Rau 2010: 3). See also Woodward and Jenkins (this volume).

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